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Statement submitted by Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Statement

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil welcomes the transition from the Millennium Development Goals, which was a catalyst for its formation, to the upcoming sustainable development goals.

Similar to when the Millennium Development Goals were introduced, we foresee that governments, corporations, organizations and efforts will once again gravitate and align itself towards the sustainable development goals.

Many of the proposed sustainable development goals reflect our objectives of sustainable production of palm oil, thus making them shared goals. Among them include poverty alleviation, food security, water management, addressing climate change, managing forests, biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and economic growth.

However, the one sustainable development goal that resonates best with us is in ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns and that is exactly what we have been striving to achieve since inception.

We are pleased to say that multi-stakeholder initiatives and commodity roundtables such as our organization have made significant progress and achieved a reasonable level of success. We have successfully forged tangible links between buyers and sellers in markets worldwide. We have effectively established a network between a kaleidoscope of stakeholders that are concerned, be it directly or indirectly, with the commodity of interest. We are now viewed upon as a credible avenue that is empowered and capable of delivering environmental, social and commercial outcomes.

All that being said, the journey is still long and there is still plenty more ground for us to cover before we can come close to achieving our shared goals.

For one, although stretched as far as possible, we have come to realize that our reach is still not long enough. Governments still play a crucial role in outreach to stakeholders, especially small farmers, so that they can effectively implement Good Agricultural Practices and embrace sustainability. There is also a need for governments to recognize the role they play in facilitating the flow of sustainable commodities through roundtable platforms such as ours. More importantly, there is a need to "Walk the Talk", which is why governments must look towards planning or considering to incorporate sustainability guidance in their own procurement activities.

Challenges aside, we will continuously and consistently create ripples in the marketplace that will bring about positive change in tandem to the sustainable development goals. However, if provided with the right platforms, opportunities and support from the United Nations, we will accelerate the current ongoing and upcoming efforts to achieve these shared goals in a shorter duration.